

SED 4200/5210: Teaching in the Major Field (English)

Oakland University
College of Arts and Sciences
Department of English
307 PH
CR 40774/44560

Professor Amanda Stearns-Pfeiffer
Office hours: Wed. 12:00-3:00, & by appt.
Office: 544G O'Dowd
stearns Pfeiffer@oakland.edu

Course Description

This course is taken during the internship year for students who plan to teach secondary English Language Arts. The prerequisite is admission to Oakland University's Secondary Teacher Education Program (STEP) and ENG 4000 (formerly ENG 398) Approaches to Teaching Literature and Writing. In this course, we will examine best practice methods for teaching students to develop their reading, writing, speaking, and critical thinking abilities. We will look at a variety of practical strategies for applying theories when working with secondary students; we will explore classroom situations and curricular issues for the purpose of giving you a broad understanding of the teacher's role in today's English Language Arts classroom. You will be required to demonstrate your competence with curriculum evaluation, lesson planning, and classroom instruction and management. More specifically, this course is designed to guide you as you work through the following areas:

- Develop and refine your methods for teaching English Language Arts
- Develop an awareness of how content, methodology, and instructional strategies relate to teaching effectiveness and classroom management
- Demonstrate the importance of thorough planning for all phases of instruction including daily lesson plans, unit plans, and plans for the academic year
- Demonstrate how to plan and present lessons designed to meet the Common Core State Standards
- Demonstrate an awareness of instructional strategies based on best practices as determined by current research and recognize the value of sharing ideas with colleagues
- Develop an awareness of some controversial issues and challenging situations
- Demonstrate strategies for dealing with classroom challenges and for creating a learning environment that helps students develop an appreciation for English Language Arts
- Demonstrate best practices by designing lessons composed of effective instructional strategies
- Develop an understanding of teaching as a lifelong learning process
- Participate in the activities of professional organizations such as attending the state conference of the Michigan Council of Teachers of English (MCTE)

You will be encouraged to reflect on your classroom experiences and to strengthen your instructional strategies and professional practices. In addition, discussions will include issues such as the role and value of education in our society, ethical issues in teaching English, individual differences and diversity, and encouraging student inquiry and approaching the liberal arts in an integrated manner.

Course Texts:

- Articles, chapters, other course readings on Moodle
- Attend MCTE Conference on Friday, October 19th

Projects, Class Requirements, and How You'll Be Graded

This course will have two major focuses: the *macro* and the *micro* of teaching English Language Arts. The macro will refer to larger scale, “big picture” issues. Often these will include philosophical debates within the field of teaching English. The micro will refer to focusing on the specific actions of teaching (i.e. the narrowed emphasis of teaching – see “HLTPs” below).

The **Macro** of teaching ELA:

- I. *Project #1: Scholarly Teacher Project (30%)* We will discuss a number of key issues in teaching English Language Arts. There will be assigned readings from *Adolescent Literacy: Turning Promise into Practice* (as PDFs on Moodle), *English Journal*, and other English education resources. You will be responsible for a series of written reflections on these readings. In addition to investigating key issues as a class, you will also choose **one** issue to individually investigate deeply. Potential issues to investigate include: student motivation with reading/writing, “meeting” standards, reader response vs. New Criticism Theory, choosing YA literature, how to create engaging writing assignments about literature, teaching grammar, addressing technology and digital learning, addressing issues of race in literature, and facilitating classroom discussions about literature. Your research question will be driven primarily by your ongoing observations in your field placement; what are the issues that excite, interest, or concern you in the English classroom?
- II. *Project #2: Curriculum Building (25%)* So far in the OU STEP English major program, you’ve had some experience with lesson planning and unit building. Now it is time to put those skills in the context of a school; you will create and submit the lessons you will teach during the Guided Lead Teaching (GLT) weeks (see course calendar for dates). The goal here is to work within the realistic context of your school while also applying the best practice methods we’ve discussed in our methods courses.
- III. *Project #3: Teaching Website (20%)* Your final project for this course will be to create a website resource including teaching ideas for teaching literature and writing, information on our key issues in English education, and example books to be used in a middle or high school classroom. This will be a culminating source of your ideas from throughout STEP, and will prepare students for the job market.

The **Micro** of teaching ELA:

- IV. *HLTPs and Reflections: (25%)* To build a bridge between your intern teaching and your coursework, you will be responsible for some formal written reflections. Many of these reflections will revolve around identified “High Leverage Teaching Practices” (HLTPs: listed at the end of this syllabus). The HLTPs will hopefully encourage more cohesion between what you’re focusing on in the classroom, what your field supervisor will emphasize in his/her observation, and what we discuss and write about (at least in part) in SED 4200.

Attendance and Late Work:

As active participants in the teaching of writing and revision, you are expected to act as professionals and **attend all class meetings**. You will spend much class time in response groups or work teams with peers, and the absence of one group member can make progress on projects difficult. **Excessive tardiness may result in an absence.**

This is a demanding course for individuals planning on being teachers. This class is committed to helping you prepare to teach, but it also requires a commitment from you to be in class and be prepared to make a contribution to our classroom work. If an absence occurs, or you know that it is going to occur, I expect that you act professional and responsible – informing me (and, if appropriate) your classmates, of an impending absence. *If you miss more than **one** unexcused classes during the semester, I reserve the right to lower your final grade by 1.0. **Three or more** unexcused absences will result in a failing grade.* An absence will only be excused **if reasonable documentation is provided or if it is cleared by the Dean of Students office**. This office must be contacted if a medical or personal crisis necessitates extended absences (3 consecutive) from class.

This class may pose a unique challenge for attendance because of its time of day and your current internship. Please note that you are expected to teach **HALF** days this semester and attend to coursework during the rest of your time (except Wednesdays when you will not be in the field at all). This will be emphasized throughout the semester, and therefore missing class because of intern-related activities is discouraged. There may, however, be exceptions to this; you are expected to communicate with me **prior** to an expected absence (and may not necessarily be considered excused).

Technology and Course Expectations:

You are required to have **computer access** for work and correspondence for this class. Many of the projects in this course will utilize basic technologies such as web-publishing, online collaboration, and presentation and word-processing. **NO CELL PHONES DURING CLASS**. Cell phone use is distracting, both for the person speaking and for those around the person using the phone. **Grade will be affected if cell phone use is habitual**. Each student has the right to his or her opinion on any subject and this classroom will be a safe place to explore these opinions. Rudeness will NOT be tolerated in any form.

OU plagiarism policy:

All members of the academic community at Oakland University are expected to practice and uphold standards of academic integrity and honesty. Academic integrity means representing oneself and one's work honestly. Misrepresentation is cheating since it means students are claiming credit for ideas or work not actually theirs and are thereby seeking a grade that is not actually earned.

Grading:

A	95-100 points	B-	80-83	D+	67-69 points
A-	90-94	C+	77-79	D	60-66
B+	87-89	C	74-76	F	0-59
B	84-86	C-	70-73		

Students with Disabilities:

Students who may need to do so are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS) at OU. The mission of this office is to ensure that all students with disabilities participate fully in university life, to coordinate services and programs so students with disabilities can maximize their educational potential and to increase the level of awareness among all members of the university community. DSS is located in 121 North Foundation Hall; phone:(248) 370-3266.

Career Services is the career resource for students of all levels within the School of Education and Human Services! Denise McConkey, Career Consultant for SEHS, can assist with resume/cover letter reviews, mock interviews, job search strategies/resources, career advising, social media branding, networking events and much more! Schedule an appointment with Denise via Handshake at oakland.joinhandshake.com. Visit oakland.edu/careerservices for more information.

High Leverage Practices:

- 1. Leading a group discussion**
- 2. Explaining and modeling content, practices, and strategies**
- 3. Eliciting and interpreting individual students' thinking**
4. Diagnosing particular common patterns of student thinking and development in a subject-matter domain
5. Implementing norms and routines for classroom discourse and work
6. Coordinating and adjusting instruction during a lesson
7. Specifying and reinforcing productive student behavior
8. Implementing organizational routines
9. Setting up and managing small group work
10. Building respectful relationships with students
11. Talking about a student with parents or other caregivers
12. Learning about students' cultural, religious, family, intellectual, and personal experiences and resources for use in instruction
13. Setting long- and short-term learning goals for students
14. Designing single lessons and sequences of lessons
- 15. Checking student understanding during and at the conclusion of lessons**
16. Selecting and designing formal assessments of student learning
17. Interpreting the results of student work, including routine assignments, quizzes, tests, projects, and standardized assessments
18. Providing oral and written feedback to students
19. Analyzing instruction for the purpose of improving it